

## DEVELOPING THE MADD OF CASAMANCE IN SENEGAL USING THE *GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION*

In the Casamance Region of Senegal local actors, with the support of national and international organizations, are working to obtain the *Geographical Indication* recognition for the wild species of fruit *Madd de Casamance* (or *Saba senegalensis*).

[An article published in the website of the World Intellectual Property Organization WIPO](#) describes the process followed, highlighting the important role that Geographical Indication mechanisms can play in achieving sustainable natural resource management and impact results for the local economy.



Madd is a wild species of fruit that grows in the region of Casamance, in the Southern part of Senegal. The fruits are rich in carbohydrates and vitamin A, K and C. Eaten fresh, the seeds are seasoned with sugar, salt or pepper. They are also used to make juices, syrup and preserves. At the time of the harvest the fresh fruits are commercialized by the producers in the city's markets. The roots, macerated leaves and latex of the plant are used by local communities for their medicinal properties.

The plant is a climbing vine with tendrils that allow it to cling to the trunks and branches of trees in the forest where it grows wild. Given these characteristics of the plant, the progressive degradation of forests has considerably reduced its survival and the possibility of using its fruits. The forests in the area of Casamance are under threats due to population growth, urban sprawl and over-exploitation of natural resource. Additionally, fires, drought, and overgrazing have increased the risk of flooding and erosion, posing a real menace to the *Madd de Casamance*. In light of this, local producers and actors in the value chain of *Madd de Casamance* have agreed on the need to adopt practices that balance the natural resource exploitation with the need to regenerate the forests where the fruit grows.

The process of protecting *Madd de Casamance* as a *Geographical Indication* started in 2017, when the Senegalese non-governmental organization *Economie Territoires et Développement Services ETDS*, based in Ziguinchor, started working with local producers interested in adding value to the goods they produced from the Madd fruit growing in Casamance and in engaging the GI registration process.

A first study was undertaken to assess the potential of the *Madd de Casamance* in terms of reputation and specific characteristics of the fresh fruit and its by-products, defining the delimitation of the geographical area of production and the traceability of products

### **Geographical Indications**

A geographical indication (GI) is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. In order to function as a GI, a sign must identify a product as originating in a given place. In addition, the qualities, characteristics or reputation of the product should be essentially due to the place of origin. Since the qualities depend on the geographical place of production, there is a clear link between the product and its original place of production.

[Wipo.int website](http://Wipo.int)



identified by the Geographical Indication, and finally defining its potential to have a positive impact on the development of natural resources in the region of Casamance.

ETDS also assisted local producers in establishing an association, responsible for governing the registration process and the GI development once registered. In November 2019, the [Association pour la Protection et la Promotion de l'Indication Géographique Madd de Casamance \(APPIGMAC\)](#) was established, bringing together all local actors engaged in the harvest, processing and distribution of the *Madd de Casamance*. By involving all the actors along the value chain, the Association allows agreeing common strategies for the successful management of the Geographical Indication brand.

National institutions, including the Senegalese Agency of Industrial Property and Innovation ASPIT, the national agency for agricultural and rural consulting ANCAR and various international organizations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization FAO, the World Intellectual Property Organization WIPO and the African Intellectual Property Organization OAPI, are also supporting the project.

One of the conditions for effectively managing a production chain of Geographical Indication is the existence in the territory of a strong organizational capacity of local actors to ensure the aspects of production, processing and marketing of products, in collaboration with all local and national institutions involved. In particular to develop the *Madd de Casamance* local actors have to implement a quality assurance scheme to ensure the fruits are harvested under specific conditions and meet certain required standards. They will also have to ensure the aspects related to the regeneration of the forests where the plant grows, implementing adequate environmental management practices to protect and enhance existing natural resources and at the same time guarantee a level of Madd production able to satisfy the markets.

The article published by WIPO informs that the complete registration process is expected in 2020 and the *Madd de Casamance* has great potential to become a flagship GI for the region, and the first GI in Africa for a wild product. The APPIGMAC Association will play a fundamental role in ensuring such a great impact result. One of the authors of the article is Pape-Tahirou Kanouté, agricultural economist and Director of the Economie Territoires et Développement Services (ETDS) organization based in Ziguinchor, which gave support to the local actors of Casamance in the management of this ambitious project.

The article has been published in the WIPO website on the occasion of the [World Intellectual Property Day 2020 – Innovate for a Green Future](#), celebrated every April 26, presenting the *Madd de Casamance* as an interesting example of how *Geographic Indication* can support the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainability and the transition to a green future.

Based on the information contained in the document [Continental Strategy for Geographical Indications in Africa 2018-2023](#) published by the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union, the Government of Senegal has already developed the legal framework for the GI procedures (page 29) and an inventory of 34 products across the country (page 63) having the potential to be recognized as GIs, including the *Madd de Casamance*.

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